

PROTECT YOUR HOME AGAINST FLOOD DAMAGE

The City of Harrisburg was the first Pennsylvania community to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System.

Improvements to the warning system and actions to reduce flood damage have resulted in lower flood insurance rates. As of October 1, 1993, all renters and property owners within the 100 year floodplain were entitled to a 15% discount; those outside the floodplain received a 5% reduction. We are continuing efforts to achieve even greater discounts.

There are low cost ways to retrofit your structure to reduce flood damage; collectively such improvements will earn higher discounts.

Methods of flood proofing are summarized in the publication "Five Ways to Floodproof" available by calling the Mayor's Office, 717.255.3040.

HARRISBURG FLOODS (Susquehanna River)

DATE	FEET*
October 5, 1786	22
March 15, 1846	22
March 18, 1865	24.6
March 19, 1868	20
January 6, 1886	19
February 1886	20.2**
June 2, 1889	26.8
February 19, 1891	19.7
May 22, 1894	25.7
March 3, 1902	22.4
March 8, 1904	20.2**
March 28, 1913	19.54
March 30, 1914	18.1
March 29, 1916	18.8
March 13, 1920	20.2
February 13, 1925	18.8
March 19, 1936	29.23
April 2, 1940	19.75
January 1, 1943	19.40
May 29, 1946	21.80
November 27, 1950	19.34
April 2, 1960	18.20
February 27, 1961	18.48
June 24, 1972	32.57
September 27, 1975	23.82
April 2, 1993	20.50
March 26, 1994	17.90
January 20, 1996	21.00**

*Data from River Forecasting Center and
Geological Survey Water Resources*

** Flooding begins above 17 feet*

*** Backwater from ice jam*

Approximate drainage area is 24,100 miles²

LOCAL FLOOD HAZARD



CITY OF HARRISBURG

Stephen R. Reed, Mayor
and
Harrisburg City Council

LOCAL FLOOD HAZARD

Sources of flooding within the City of Harrisburg are the slow rising Susquehanna River and Paxton Creek/Spring Creek which can flash flood or flood due to backup of Susquehanna River at floodstage.

The Susquehanna River rises so slowly that 24 hours to several days warning is given of potential flooding. Announcements are made on television and radio stations and written notices are delivered to properties in the floodplain.

Since Paxton Creek can rise quickly ("flash flood"), stream height and rainfall gauges along the Paxton Creek transmit data to a satellite which relays information to a computer containing the flood model. These units, which have audible alarms, are located at the City of Harrisburg's Communication Center, County and Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency. The City uses a recorded message and automatic calling system to phone businesses and homes of owners of properties along Paxton Creek. All are called in eight minutes.

Spring Creek flooding is rarer than Paxton Creek; when flooding does occur it is usually in conjunction with the River or Paxton Creek flooding. Most land along Spring Creek floodplain is vacant.

An even rarer possibility for flooding is failure of the Raystown Dam while water is coming over its top. Any damage would occur in the section of the floodplain nearest to the Susquehanna River. A warning time of 27 hours is anticipated.

NOT JUST IN FLOODPLAIN

Do not be misled by the terms "floodplain" and "100 year floodplain."

Areas within the floodplain are more likely to flood. But several times more dollars in flood damage occurs in the area outside of the 100 year floodplain.

The federal government uses the term "100 year floodplain" to describe the area which it mathematically figures would flood once in a 100 years according to its geographic



feature. Experience has shown some of these areas have flooded as often as 3 times in 10 years.

CAN HAPPEN AT ANYTIME

This folder contains a chart of recorded Susquehanna River floods with height adjusted to current river gage location.

Note that floods have occurred in 11 of the 12 months of the year.

Note that there have been times when floods occurred in consecutive years or biannually. Other times they are 10 or 20 years apart.

You never know when floods may occur. Be prepared. Carry flood insurance. The City's efforts at flood preparedness have given you a discount.

Information in the Flood Protection binders at local Public Libraries and technical assistance from the City's Building Inspector will help you to reduce or eliminate flood damage.

Learn about the Flood Warning System. If you must evacuate know what to do, where to go.

Leave promptly when told to do so. Do not drive through water on the roadway; it can float your car and carry it away.